THE MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MORAY COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2009

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors G McIntyre (Convener), L Bell, G Coull, S Cree, J Divers, J Hamilton, J Hogg, B Jarvis, G Leadbitter, J MacKay, A McDonald, G McDonald, E McGillivray, A McKay, F Murdoch, I Ogilvie, P Paul, J Russell, M Shand, J Sharp, R Shepherd and D Stewart.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Chief Executive, the Director of Community Services, the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Head of Development Services, The Head of Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services, the Head of Educational Development Services, the Corporate Policy Unit Manager and the Principal Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the Meeting.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors M McConachie, D Ross, A Wright and I Young

1. COMMUNITY AWARDS

The Meeting joined the Chairman in congratulating all those involved in the recent successes of four of Moray's communities both at National and International level namely, Forres, in achieving a gold medal in the European wide Entente Florale Competition, Duffus in achieving a silver medal in the Britain in Bloom Awards, the only Scottish small village to be shortlisted, and Keith and Rothiemay on winning two separate awards at national level for their war memorials.

2. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS

In terms of Standing Order 20 the Chairman advised that the Administration Group had discussed Agenda Item 3 'Financial Plan Review' and Agenda Item and 4 'Budget Consultation Proposals'. There were no other declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the Agenda.

3. FINANCIAL PLAN REVIEW

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer updating the Council on the major issues affecting the Council's Financial Plan and to provide an assessment of the medium term position.

The Chief Financial Officer advised that the overview describes the likelihood of substantial cuts for the Council over the next four years. The reduction in council spend anticipated from the national figures that are available, gives the Council real term cuts of £20 million by year 4 of this 4 year projection which equates to around a 10% cut to the council. He further stated that some projections nationally indicate that the figures could be worse than that. Reducing the council's expenditure from £200 million pounds per year to £189 million pounds per year and being expected to continue to provide what it is currently providing is clearly a very serious concern for the Council. He further advised that he needed to emphasise that the figures he has produced in the report are going to change again and again over the next 6 months as the Council moves towards closing the budget for 2010/2011 and even more dramatically the figures are going to change over the next 4 years and that he could only see the figures getting worse and not better than are presented in the report.

He further stated that there is a great certainty that the level of savings will be colossal, at least over the next 4 years and potentially for the next 8 years and advised that the Council therefore needs to plan accordingly.

Thereafter Members expressed their concerns regarding the financial situation facing the Council and in response to the Chairman's request that all Members of the Moray Council put aside party politics and work together for the people they represent, Councillor Paul on behalf of the SNP Group stated that the SNP group was prepared to work with the Administration Group in looking at savings but at all times reserve the right to oppose anything that they were of the opinion would bring hardship to the people of Moray. Councillor Divers stated that difficult times are facing the Council and there was a need for Members coming together with a shared view prior to going to the public.

Thereafter the Meeting noted the report.

4. BUDGET CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing the Meeting with a framework for consulting on the budget savings that the Council will be required to implement during the next two financial years and to communicate current indications on the future of Council finances as part of the consultation process.

Following consideration the Council agreed proposals for consultation on budget savings for the next financial year and the inclusion of information on current expectations of reductions in Council budgets over the next few years.

5. REVISED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - LOCAL DELIVERY ACTION PLANS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking the Council to consider the Local Delivery Action Plans which will support the delivery against the national and local outcomes within the Single Outcome Agreement.

Following consideration the Meeting agreed:

(i) to note comments/amendments from the Community Planning Board have been incorporated into the Local Delivery Action Plans;

(ii) to approve the Local Delivery Action Plans which support the delivery against the national and local outcomes within the Single Outcome Agreement; and

(iii) that any Local Action Delivery Plans which require additional resources from the Council be considered as part of the budget process.

6. REVISED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - SERVICE OUTCOMES, SERVICE STANDARDS AND STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive asking the Council to consider Key Service Outcomes, Service Standards and Statutory Performance Indicators for all Council Services as a result of the revised performance management framework and the implementation of the agreed reporting framework.

Following consideration the Council approved Service Outcomes, Service Standards and noted the Statutory Performance Indicators for all Council Services subject to the following minor amendments:

(i) Under reference to the key service outcomes in relation to Central Services, Administration of Council Business, it was agreed to amend the frequency/source to bi-annual monitoring; and

(ii) Under reference to the key service outcomes in relation to Central Services, Estates Services is was agreed to amend wording of the Outcome Measure to read “% of the number of Council Services provided etc.”.